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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced that Emmanuel Osho, a 49-year-old ramp services clerk employed by United Airlines inside Dulles International Airport, pleaded guilty today to one count of wire fraud before the Honorable T.S. Ellis, III, in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Virginia. Osho, who supervised baggage handling at Dulles for United Airlines flights, admitted to stealing bulk quantities of credit card mailings from the U.S. Mail as it was routed through the airport on commercial carriers for delivery in Northern Virginia and elsewhere on the east coast. Osho faces a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison, a fine of \$1 million, and an order requiring full restitution when sentenced on October 14, 2005.

The charges against Osho arose from a five year investigation by the Postal Inspection Service of mail thefts and credit card losses linked to Dulles Airport. According to the criminal complaint filed in April 2005, during his shifts Osho would wait for pallets of mail to arrive at the airport as cargo on commercial United Airlines flights and then, while the pallets sat on the tarmac awaiting transfer to mail facilities or connecting flights, search them for envelopes containing new, or renewal, credit cards intended for Virginia residents and others. He would then steal the envelopes from the mail, smuggle them out of the airport, and transport them to Ademola Idowu, a co-conspirator living in Brooklyn, New York. Idowu would then activate the cards and distribute them to "strikers," individuals who would pick up the cards at Idowu's home, travel to distant towns along the east coast, and use the cards to obtain fraudulent cash advances at banks and credit unions. In February 2005 Idowu was also arrested by federal authorities for his involvement in the scam, and was recently sentenced to five years and three months in prison.

The government calculates that total losses from the scam were nearly \$4 million. Osho stole credit cards belonging to approximately 2000 people, those cards having been issued by seven different credit card companies and 56 credit unions.

United States Attorney Paul J McNulty said, "This defendant abused a position of trust he held at Dulles International airport by stealing the identity and credit cards of many people. His conviction is a victory in both our ongoing battle against identity theft and our efforts to maintain the security of our airports."

According to the Inspector in Charge of the Washington Division, B. Keith Morris, "The US Postal Inspection Service is responsible for protecting the nation's mail from criminal attack.

Mr. Osho violated the public's trust when he stole mail intended for another person. Postal Inspectors vigorously investigate violations of that trust and seek all criminal remedies available under the law. Each year, the Postal Service delivers more than 206 billion pieces of mail, on time and intact. Today, we delivered a message to Mr. Osho - the U.S. Mail is among the most sacred and trusted forms of communication; violate that trust, suffer the consequences. The Postal Inspection Service and US Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Virginia, stand together in their resolve to defend the American public's trust and uphold the sanctity of the U.S. Mail."

The investigation was handled by the United States Postal Inspection Service and prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling and Special Assistant United States Attorney Lana N. Pettus.

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